

Amendment and Response

Stefan SANNER

Serial No.: 09/446,323

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For: DEVICE FOR TAKING AND EXAMINING SAMPLES

- Sub C17
- displaceable within the housing (50) such that the testing means (40) can be brought in contact with the sample mixture for analyzing the sample mixture.
2. (AMENDED) The device according to claim 1, wherein the sample-taking means (10) is operable to be introduced into an open end of the housing (50) and further wherein the sample-taking means (10) comprises a thread (18) which cooperates with a corresponding thread (53) in the housing (50).
3. (AMENDED) The device according to claim 1, wherein a sample-facing end of the sample-taking means (10) comprises a sample chamber (20).
7. (AMENDED) The device according to claim 1, wherein one end of the cartridge (30) comprises an opening (32) which can be closed by means of a ball (33).
8. (AMENDED) The device according to claim 1, wherein the cartridge (30) has a bottom (34) operable to be perforated.
10. (AMENDED) The device according to claim 1, wherein the testing means has the shape of a cylinder and has an end that tapers in the form of a truncated cone (41), wherein a tip thereof has an opening (42).
11. (AMENDED) The device according to claim 1, wherein the testing means (40) is operable to be brought in contact with the content of the cartridge (30) if the sample-taking means (10) is arranged in the housing.
12. (AMENDED) A kit for preparing a ready-to-use device for taking and examining samples comprising:
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- 5021
- (a) a sample-taking means (10) for taking a sample;
(b) a housing (50) with a cartridge (30) arranged therein; and
(c) a testing means (40),

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wherein the sample-taking means (10) and the testing means (40) are introducible into the housing (50) and the testing means (40) is operable to be displaced after having been introduced into the housing (50).

- 5021
13. (NEW) A device for taking and examining samples, comprising a housing having positioned therein a cartridge, a testing means, and a sample-taking means, the sample-taking means comprising two half-tubes connected to each other, wherein the cartridge is displaceable within the housing such that a sample introduced by the sample-taking means is operable to form a sample mixture with a content of the cartridge, and wherein the testing means is displaceable within the housing such that the testing means can be brought into contact with the sample mixture.

14. (NEW) The device according to claim 13, wherein at least one of the two half-tubes comprises a first disk and a second disk defining a sample chamber.

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15. (NEW) The device according to claim 14, wherein the first disk comprises a sieve and an indentation, and further wherein an edge of the first disk comprises a cone-shaped ring.

16. (NEW) The device according to claim 15, wherein the cartridge is cylindrically shaped and comprises, on one end, a truncated cone engageable with the cone-shaped ring.

17. (NEW) The device of claim 13, wherein the two half-tubes are connected by a joint, and wherein the joint is selected from the group consisting of a film hinge and an elastic web.

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Page 4 of 12

18. (NEW) The device of claim 14, wherein the first disk is coupled to the sample-taking means with predetermined breaking points.
19. (NEW) A device for taking and examining samples, comprising:
a housing having a first end, a second end, and a passageway extending between;
a cartridge operable to be received in the first end of the housing, wherein the cartridge is displaceable within the passageway of the housing;
a sample-taking means operable to be at least partially received in the first end of the housing, wherein a sample introduced by the sample-taking means is operable to form a sample mixture with contents of the cartridge; and
a testing means operable to be received in the second end of the housing, wherein the testing means is displaceable within the passageway of the housing such that the testing means can be brought in contact with the sample mixture.
20. (NEW) The device of claim 19, wherein the sample-taking means couples to the first end of the housing.
21. (NEW) A method for taking and examining samples, comprising:
collecting a sample in a sample-taking means;
coupling the sample-taking means to a first end of a housing, the housing having a cartridge located therein;
displacing the cartridge relative to the sample taking means;
combining the sample and contents of the cartridge to form a sample mixture;
providing a testing means at a second end of the housing; and
displacing the testing means relative to the housing, whereby the testing means contacts the sample mixture.